May 2017

Department of Toxic Substances Control - Fact Sheet

COMMUNITY UPDATE

The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.

The American Jewish University, Brandeis Bardin Institute

This community update has been prepared by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to confirm the safety of the Brandeis Bardin Institute Campus.

The Brandeis Bardin Institute Campus is safe for use by Faculty, Staff, Students, and Campers.

- Contamination at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) **does not** pose a health threat to users (e.g., campers, visitors, students, faculty, administrators or staff) of Brandeis Bardin Institute, or other off-site areas.
- A significant amount of SSFL data have been collected to date, and are publically available at: http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Santa_Susana_Field_Lab/index.cfm.
- Evaluation of sample results from the Brandeis Bardin property confirmed that the levels found do not pose a threat to users.
- DTSC continues to closely monitor and oversee environmental testing associated with the ongoing SSFL investigation and cleanup.
- If any data demonstrating a threat to human health at the Brandeis Bardin property or any other areas from SSFL is discovered, DTSC will take immediate actions to stop that threat.

A physical Buffer Zone separates Brandeis Bardin property from contamination at SSFL.

- In 1992 and 1994, studies found chemicals and radionuclides on an area that, at the time, was part of the Brandeis Bardin property directly north of SSFL operation areas.
- Sampling found mercury in soil at that former Brandeis Bardin property and lead contamination at Sage Ranch. The areas underwent cleanup by Rocketdyne soon after the discovery and the 1994 study confirmed the cleanup.
- In 1995, based on the 1992 and 1994 studies, the US EPA determined that while radionuclide levels exceeded local background levels established at the time, they did not pose a threat to human health or the environment and were below levels typically found throughout the United States.
- In 1997, Boeing purchased the areas of the Brandeis Bardin property with the highest radionuclides and incorporated them into the SSFL site as the Northern Buffer Zone. The purchased property also included the areas with chemical contamination that were cleaned by Rocketdyne.
- U.S. EPA 2012 sample results confirmed that contamination from SSFL is controlled at the Northern Buffer Zone and is not entering the Brandeis Bardin property. Follow-on sampling done by Brandeis Bardin in 2016 and 2017 reached the same conclusion.

Measures have been taken to prevent SSFL contamination from traveling onto Brandeis Bardin property.

- A cleanup of radionuclides at the Former Sodium Disposal Facility, located near the southern Brandeis Bardin property boundary with SSFL, was done in 2000.
- Contamination in the SSFL Northern Drainage was removed between 2008 and 2010 to eliminate possible exposures from recreational shooting range debris.

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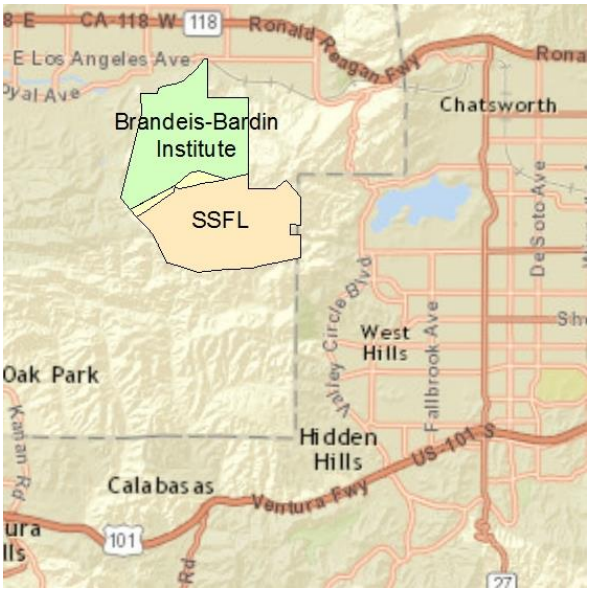
- Cleanup actions done between 2009 and 2013 removed contaminated sediments from the SSFL drainages upstream of the Brandeis Bardin property.
- The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board requires monitoring of surface water discharged from SSFL. The standards for that discharge are protective of human health and the environment.
- Surface water discharge requirements are very strict. In general, they are stricter than drinking water requirements. Even if exceedances of a surface water discharge standards were detected, this would not necessarily equate to a threat to human health.
- Onsite erosion and runoff controls are engineered to cope with heavy rain events.

On-going SSFL evaluation and cleanup.

- The investigation fieldwork at SSFL has been completed and the draft data reviewed, and the draft investigation reports are being prepared. The draft cleanup decision documents and a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) are in preparation and will soon be available for public review. SSFL cleanup will commence after final cleanup plans and environmental documents are approved.
- DTSC coordinates with other regulatory agencies (Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Public Health, and State and Federal Fish and Wildlife agencies) for the SSFL investigation and cleanup activities.
- DTSC will continue to monitor, review and evaluate information concerning SSFL and adjacent property.

You can find more information on DTSC's assessment of the Brandeis Bardin property at:

http://www.dtsc-ssfl.com/files/lib_offsite_investig/bbi/DTSCTechMem/SSFL-Technical-Memo-on-the-Brandeis-Bardin-Campus_050217.pdf



Site Location and Background

The American Jewish University – Brandeis Bardin Institute is located in the Simi Hills and is used for religious activities, teaching, and camping.

Directly south of the Brandeis Bardin Institute is SSFL, where rocket engine testing and nuclear research operations were conducted from the 1950's to the early 2000s.

The activities at SSFL resulted in chemicals and radionuclides being released into the soil and groundwater. Cleanup of the chemicals and radionuclides at SSFL is ongoing and is regulated by DTSC. The Brandeis Bardin Institute Campus is safe for use by Faculty, Staff, Students, and Campers.

For more information, please contact:
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